

February 3, 2010

TO: Teresa Parsons, SPHR
Director's Review Program Supervisor

FROM: Kristie Wilson
Director's Review Investigator

SUBJECT: Isaac Schlittenhart v. Spokane Community College (SCC)
Allocation Review Request ALLO-09-052

On December 11, 2009 a Director's Review meeting took place by telephone conference call concerning the allocation of Isaac Schlittenhart's position. Present during the telephone conference call were Isaac Schlittenhart, SCC; Michael Lenker, SCC HR office; Bob Nelson, SCC (Isaac's supervisor); and myself.

Director's Determination

This position review was based on the work performed for the six-month period prior to April 29, 2009, the date SCC's Human Resources (HR) Office received the request for a position review. As the Director's review investigator, I carefully considered all of the documentation in the file, including the Position Description dated April 14, 2008 and the exhibits and written responses submitted by both parties. Based on my review and analysis of the assigned duties and responsibilities, I conclude Mr. Schlittenhart's position is properly allocated to the Information Technology Specialist 2 (ITS 2) classification.

Background

On April 29, 2009, SCC's HR Office received Mr. Schlittenhart's request for a review of his Information Technology Specialist (ITS 2) position. Mr. Schlittenhart believes his position should be reallocated to an Information Technology Specialist 3 (ITS 3). On July 29, 2009, Human Resource Consultant, Michael Lenker completed the Report of Position Review. Mr. Lenker determined the typical work performed by Mr. Schlittenhart's position does not reflect the level of responsibilities of the ITS 3 classification. As a result, Mr. Lenker

determined the ITS 2 was the appropriate classification for the work assigned to Mr. Schlittenhart's position.

On August 26, 2009, the Department of Personnel received a request for a Director's review of SCC's allocation determination.

Summary of Mr. Schlittenhart's Comments

Mr. Schlittenhart asserts his position supports the SCC website and underlying applications and components. He states that he independently creates web applications and features to client specifications (after initial tasking from Mr. Nelson, his supervisor), maintains existing applications, and creates and monitors the code base for SCC's website and sub-sites. In addition, Mr. Schlittenhart troubleshoots applications, investigates performance problems, and implements emergency fixes as needed and coordinates design, maintenance, and testing, and ensures standards are met (quality assurance).

Mr. Schlittenhart states that new projects are routed through a single point of entry so that prioritization may be maintained in an organized fashion. He asserts that his position does most of the tasks listed in the ITS 3 specification, such as:

- Uses established work procedures and innovative approaches to complete assignments and coordinate projects such as conducting needs assessments – Mr. Schlittenhart feels that although he does not perform needs assessments, nor does he lead projects, he does coordinate projects.
- Creates installation plans – Mr. Schlittenhart states he just completed a guide to setting up a new web server with the software and setting prerequisites to make the website run on the new server.
- Serves as system administrator – Mr. Schlittenhart states he does not technically serve as the system administrator, most of the work that he performs crosses into the server administration realm, such as managing IIS and analyzing system logs to identify potential issues.
- Monitors or enhances operating environments – Mr. Schlittenhart states that this is a daily task. He monitors error reports from the server, independently fixes errors that are discovered, and prepares a report to his supervisor on these situations and the potential fixes.
- Supports, maintains, and enhances existing applications – Mr. Schlittenhart states that he supports and maintains existing applications a large percentage of the time.

Mr. Schlittenhart asserts that the projects and sites he has worked on rise to the level of moderately sized. They impact multiple divisions and large groups, for example he works on the SCC website which impacts all campus and student body.

Summary of Mr. Nelson's (Supervisor) Comments

Mr. Nelson stated that Mr. Schlittenhart is highly skilled, self motivated, and very persistent in his problem solving approach. Mr. Nelson asserts that he regularly delegates complex projects to Mr. Schlittenhart for programming and development; however, he always remains in the loop. Mr. Nelson asserts that he spot-checks Mr. Schlittenhart's work most of the time. Mr. Nelson states that he never intentionally required Mr. Schlittenhart to work out of class and does not believe his work assignments are out of scope with the work assignments of other ITS 2 employees in the district.

Mr. Nelson also confirmed that he is responsible for delegating and prioritizing all work projects/flow in the Web Services department. Mr. Nelson assigns, prioritizes, and distributes all incoming work. Mr. Nelson asserts that Mr. Schlittenhart performs research and trial and error of new solutions/components/technologies to meet specific project needs as assigned by Mr. Nelson.

Summary of SCC's Comments

Mr. Lenker explained in Exhibit A-3 that it is apparent that Mr. Schlittenhart is a valuable asset to SCC and works well once a task/project is prioritized and assigned from Mr. Nelson. However, Mr. Lenker feels that when reviewing the information in relation to the organizational structure and by removing the performance related information, the majority of Mr. Schlittenhart's duties do not rise to the ITS 3 level.

During the desk audit the work dynamic was described for all assignments no matter the scale of the project. For instance, the Web Manager would go to the original department/client meeting to determine the scope of a web project. After the initial client meeting the manager would prioritize the work and then assign the work or a portion of the work (based on workload, size/complexity of the project, and the priority) to Mr. Schlittenhart to complete. The Web Manager is kept apprised of the projects' status and has final approval of the work performed.

Mr. Lenker asserts that Mr. Schlittenhart does not serve as the system administrator, does not independently correct network malfunctions, does not assess training needs, and does not implement policies or standards.

Therefore, SCC believes the ITS 2 is the best fit for Mr. Schlittenhart's position.

Reason and Basis for Finding

The purpose of a position review is to determine which classification best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of a position. A position review is neither a measurement of the volume of work performed, nor an evaluation of the expertise with which that work is performed. A position review is a comparison of the duties and responsibilities of a particular position to the available classification specifications. This review results in a determination of the class that best describes the overall duties and

responsibilities of the position. See Liddle-Stamper v. Washington State University, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).

Most positions within the civil service system occasionally perform duties that appear in more than one classification. However, when determining the appropriate classification for a specific position, the duties and responsibilities of that position must be considered in their entirety and the position must be allocated to the classification that provides the best fit overall for the majority of the position's duties and responsibilities. See Dudley v. Dept. of Labor and Industries, PRB Case No. R-ALLO-07-007 (2007).

The definition for ITS 3 states:

In support of information systems and users in an assigned area of responsibility, independently performs consulting, designing, programming, installation, maintenance, quality assurance, troubleshooting and/or technical support for applications, hardware and software products, databases, database management systems, support products, network infrastructure equipment, or telecommunications infrastructure, software or hardware.

Uses established work procedures and innovative approaches to complete assignments and coordinate projects such as conducting needs assessments; leading projects; creating installation plans; analyzing and correcting network malfunctions; serving as system administrator; monitoring or enhancing operating environments; or supporting, maintaining and enhancing existing applications.

The majority of assignments and projects are moderate in size and impact an agency division or large workgroup or single business function; or internal or satellite operations, multiple users, or more than one group. Consults with higher-level technical staff to resolve complex problems.

Mr. Schlittenhart assists the Web Manager in developing and maintaining data-driven interactive web applications. He assists with the design and development of new components for the SCC website. The workflow is generally routed through the Web Manager for prioritization.

Although Mr. Schlittenhart does coordinate projects, he does not perform needs assessments or lead projects.

If a new application is requested, the request goes to the Web Manager and depending on the scope/size the Web Manager may complete it himself or both the Web Manager

and Mr. Schlittenhart will complete it. If tasks are brought in to Mr. Schlittenhart, they are given to the Web Manager to develop the interface and necessary tools.

As indicated in Mr. Lenker's memo (Exhibit A-3) Mr. Schlittenhart does not independently conduct needs assessments; lead IT projects; or serve as the system administrator.

I believe the scope of his assignments fall within the ITS 2 classification.

As previously noted by the Personnel Resources Board (PRB), the guidance provided in the Department of Personnel's Classification and Pay Administrative Guide establishes that the following standards are primary considerations in allocating positions:

- a) Category concept (if one exists).
- b) Definition or basic function of the class.
- c) Distinguishing characteristics of a class.
- d) Class series concept, definition/basic function, and distinguishing characteristics of other classes in the series in question.

After reviewing the documentation and comments from all parties with regard to Mr. Schlittenhart's assigned duties and responsibilities, I conclude the ITS 2 classification best describes Mr. Schlittenhart's position.

Appeal Rights

RCW 41.06.170 governs the right to appeal. RCW 41.06.170(4) provides, in relevant part, the following:

An employee incumbent in a position at the time of its allocation or reallocation, or the agency utilizing the position, may appeal the allocation or reallocation to the Washington personnel resources board. Notice of such appeal must be filed in writing within thirty days of the action from which appeal is taken.

The mailing address for the Personnel Resources Board is P.O. Box 40911, Olympia, Washington, 98504-0911. The physical location of the Personnel Resources Board is 600 South Franklin, Olympia, Washington.

If no further action is taken, the Director's determination becomes final.

cc: Isaac Schlittenhart, SCC
Michael Lenker, SCC HR office
Lisa Skriletz, DOP Classification and Pay Manager

Enclosure: Exhibit List

List of Exhibits

A. Isaac Schlittenhart Exhibits

1. Request for Director's Review August 26 2009
2. Attached letter of request
3. SCC Allocation determination letter July 29, 2009

B. Community Colleges of Spokane

1. Position Review Request received April 2009
2. Position Description on file (updated April 14, 2009)
3. Organizational Chart depicting Community College of Spokane – Information Technology (Web) departments
4. SCC Allocation Determination letter July 29, 2009